the Richmond Review

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Devil's Teeth Founder Embraces SF's Spirit

Devil's Teeth Baking Company's owner Hilary Passman in one of her baking kitchens. Her story, and the story of the highly successful eatery with locations in the Richmond and Sunset districts and in the Embarcadero, is told by columnist Sean Rinn. Read his column on page 2. More profiles of local restaurants and owners can be found in his columns, "Family Meal," at RichmondSunsetNews.com. ***Photo by Sean Rinn.***

RV Parking Remains a Contentious Housing Issue

By Thomas K. Pendergast

The latest development in the City's ongoing struggle to deal with people living in recreational vehicles (RVs) is the San Francisco Board of Supervisors' rejection of Mayor London Breed's revived policy for towing these rolling shelters away.

Towing of RVs was suspended during the pandemic and stayed that way after a 2023 California Court of Appeals decision banning the City from towing RVs if they accrue too many parking tickets.

In June, the U.S. Supreme Court reversed that decision when they ruled in City of Grants Pass v. Johnson that local governments can enforce criminal penalties for public camping or sleeping, even when there is limited shelter space.

Homeless advocates appealed the SF Municipal Transportation Agency's (SFMTA) new directive to the SF Board of Supervisors, which upheld the appeal and stopped the practice with a 7-3 vote, with supervisors Joel Engardio, Matt Dorsey and Raphael Mandelman voting against the appellants.

In the Richmond District, the homeless in RVs mostly line up alongside Golden Gate Park on Fulton Street or around Geary Boulevard.

In the Sunset, homeless people in RVs have been an ongoing issue along the Lower Great Highway from Lincoln Way to Sloat Boulevard.

A Dec. 10, 2024, meeting where the appeal was heard defined the unique issues of dealing with people housed in vehicles.

"According to the 2024 point-in-time count, there are over 1,400 people in San Francisco living in their vehicles. Ninety percent of families experiencing unsheltered home-

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Sunset Supe May Face Recall Over Great Highway Closure

By Megan Robertson

Following the passing of Proposition K, a controversial ballot measure which now will turn the Upper Great Highway into a full-time city park, a group of westside residents are beginning their attempt to recall District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio, who advocated for the measure to be on the ballot.

On Dec. 4, 2024, Richard Corriea and Vin Budhai submitted a formal letter of intent to recall Engardio. Budhai is the founder of Open the Great Highway and a resident of Engardio's home district. Corriea is a longtime Richmond District resident, as well as the former president of the Planning Association for the Richmond and prior captain of the San Francisco Police Department's Richmond Station.

Corriea and Budhai collected 80 signatures from District 4 residents, which are included in the Dec. 4 letter. Per the San Francisco Department of Election's requirements, Engardio filed a formal response to the intent. Corriea and Budhai are now in the process of further signature collection, with the hopes of a special election in 2025, before Engardio's term is up in early 2027.

Engardio won the seat in 2022 with 50.7% of the vote, narrowly beating incumbent Gordon Mar. He entered a heightened political landscape on the city's westside surrounding the stretch of the Upper Great Highway between Lincoln Way and Sloat Boulevard. The roadway was closed to traffic completely in 2020 to provide residents a safe recreation area during the COVID-19 pandemic. In 2022, the City landed on an agreement, to last until the end of 2025, which would close this stretch of the highway to most vehicle traffic on week-

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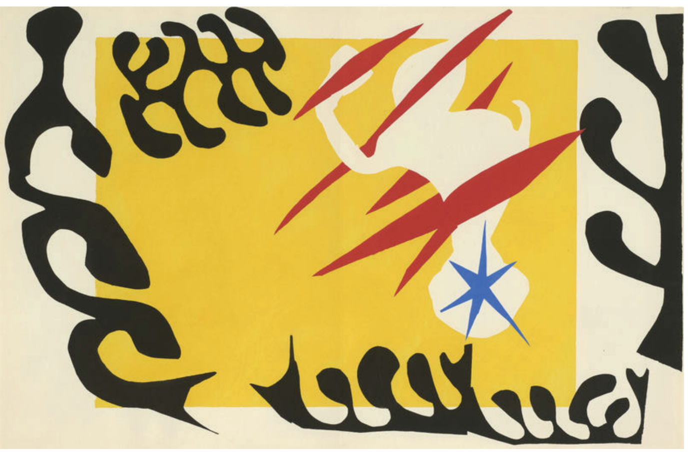
Matisse's 'Jazz Unbound' Prints on Display at de Young

By Noma Faingold

Originally, the very limited edition of artist Henri Matisse's 1947 book of prints was going to be called, "Circus," because the inspiration for several motifs concerned performing artists and balancing acts. However, during the two-year period of creating 20 color stencil prints (pochoirs), the title changed to "Jazz," at the suggestion of Greek art publisher Tériade.

Matisse (1869–1954) embraced the new title because he saw the connection between visual art and musical improvisation.

"These images, with their lively and violent tones, derive from crystallizations of memories of circuses, folktales and voyages," Matisse explained in the hand-written accompanying text.



The Nightmare of the White Elephant (Le cauchemar de l'elephant blanc). Image by Henri Matisse (1869-1954) 1947. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, museum purchase, gift of Margaret and William R. Hearst III. © 2024 Succession H. Matisse/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York Photograph by Randy Dodson, courtesy of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco.

In early 2024, the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco acquired a rare, pristine unbound copy of "Jazz" and will be showing off the then-radically illustrated book in an exhibition called "Matisse Jazz Unbound," at the de Young Museum from Jan. 25 through July 6.

"The acquisition is a really big deal. It's a luxury book," FAMSF Curator of Prints and Drawings Natalia Lauricella said. "It was a top priority. 'Jazz' is considered the pinnacle of Matisse's graphic art."

The exhibit consists of the 20 unbound, framed works, which Lauricella refers to as "plates," lining the walls of a main-floor gallery, along with four other bound Matisse books from the museum's collection, to be displayed in vitrines.

When Matisse began the project in 1943 at age 74, he was not well. He underwent risky surgery in 1941 after being diagnosed with abdominal cancer. Post-surgery, he was grateful to be alive, but he was confined to his bed and a wheelchair until his death at 84. In spite of his physical limitations and the German occupation of France (where he lived), he produced some of

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Family Meal

Sean Rinn

Devil's Teeth

Hilary Passman is the owner of Devil's Teeth Baking Company, a San Francisco staple that has thrived since opening in 2011. But it was not always so easy for her.

Before owning Devil's Teeth, Passman was an attorney on the East Coast who recognized her career was eating up valuable quality time with her kids.

"I was an attorney, I worked downtown and I had too many kids," Passman joked. OK, not too many, but I didn't get to see them, so I needed a reason to stop being an attorney and start spending more time with my kids."

Passman followed her heart. She quit being an attorney and pursued baking by selling wedding cakes on Craigslist and selling pastries wholesale to cafes when she moved to San Francisco in 1996.

"That was kind of the intermediate step for me, but that was me having my kids all day and staying up all night making brownies and lemon bars, so it was more of an impetus to open a real store where people could actually help me," she said.

Passman cherished the time she was able to spend with her kids and pursued her passion at night, but she knew she did not want baking to be a side hustle forever. When thinking about how she could open her own bakery, memories of her upbringing on the East Coast gave her a spark.

Devil's Teeth Baking Company has become a fixture in the Outer Richmond with its location at 3619 Balboa St. ***Photo by Sean Rinn.***

"I went to high school on the East Coast, and there were breakfast sandwiches every 10 steps; every corner store had one," Passman said. "I thought it was interesting that there wasn't a really delicious and complete breakfast sandwich to go in the Sunset. There are a lot of different restaurants, but not that specific thing. So yeah, I'll just make it myself."

The breakfast sandwich was the catalyst for opening the first Devil's Teeth on Noriega Street almost 14 years ago. It took months for Passman to perfect the sandwich by tinkering with buttermilk biscuit recipes, since she believed breakfast sandwiches work better on a biscuit rather than a bagel, and cooking eggs in every way imaginable to find the perfect texture and fluffiness that would complement the biscuit.

Since Passman decided to be the change she wanted in the Sunset, her breakfast sandwich exploded in popularity to the extent where it requires the Devil's Teeth staff to make hundreds a day. On weekends, lines will extend down the street as customers eagerly await the opportunity to pick up their breakfast sandwich.

"On the weekend, we can sell 600 a day. Yeah, that's a lot of eggs," said Passman.

A notable trait that has made Devil's Teeth successful enough to expand multiple locations – including one in the Richmond District and one in the Embarcadero – is the culture Passman has built for her staff encouraging creativity and pulling from family roots.

"That's kind of what it's all about, right?" Passman said.

A recent example of allowing others in the kitchen to be inspired by their roots is the Ube blondie bar found at the Balboa location, coming from a Filipino baker whose grandmother used to make Ube cake.

"That is my kids' favorite thing on the menu right now," Passman said. "I'm grateful that the bakers know that they have the space to make what they want. I'm grateful that people are sharing what they like."

It does not end there. The coffee cake recipe came from one of the baker's mothers. Even with the signature breakfast sandwich, Passman originally used her grandmother's recipe for the biscuit, but changed it when one of her first bakers brought in a family recipe for a biscuit that she acknowledged was better. It has not changed since.

While Devil's Teeth's foundation was built from a strong sense of family values, the bakery has grown roots that built a home for Passman and her family.

"I mean, every neighborhood has its own different flavor and feel, and for me it's the Sunset. That's just home. I moved here in 1996 and I'm not leaving."

Passman has embraced San Francisco with love. It is how she built her business, the culture she created for her staff and how she immersed herself in the community. She has become a true San Franciscan.

"My kids all went to public schools in the Richmond, and I am super invested in San Francisco and especially out near the beach. That's just where I want to be," she said. "I love the fog, I love the sun, I love the community. I love the fact that it's so diverse. I love that we have locals and tourists, and yet I cannot walk down the street without saying 'hi' to 12 people. It's my favorite city. It's an amazing city."

In the Balboa Street location, Passman showcases art from local artists like Karii Rurup-Coleman who has displayed her ethereal multi-media paintings at Devil's Teeth in the past. Passman has truly embraced the spirit of San Francisco carving out a corner for her family and being an active member of the community.

It's fitting that the bakery's name also pays tribute to San Francisco. Devil's Teeth was a nickname sailors gave the Farallon Islands during the Gold Rush due to its resemblance of shark teeth and its reputation for being a breeding ground for sharks.

Passman also admitted that she sees double meaning in the name, comparing Devil's Teeth to that of a sweet tooth.

Devil's Teeth Baking Company is located at 3876 Noriega St., 3619 Balboa St. and at 1 Embarcadero Center. Learn more at devilsteethbakingcompany.com.

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Publisher and Editor-in-Chief: Michael Durand
Editor: Paul Kozakiewicz
Writers: Linda Badger, Erin Bank, Beth Bodner, George Brown V, Nicholas David, Noma Faingold, Jonathan Farrell, Judy Goddess, Asha Ingram, Klyde Java, Clarisse Kim, Beth Lederer, Thomas K. Pendergast, Kate Quach, Megan Robertson
Photographers: Tyrone Bartoli, Noma Faingold, Clarisse Kim, Beth Lederer Kate Quach, Thomas K. Pendergast
Cartoonist: Paul Kilduff **Crossword Puzzle:** Jess Goldstein
Columnists: Supervisor Connie Chan, Judge Quentin L. Kopp (ret.), John M. Lee, Sean Rinn
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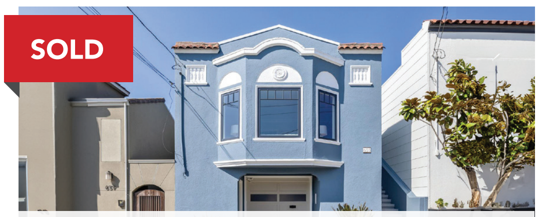

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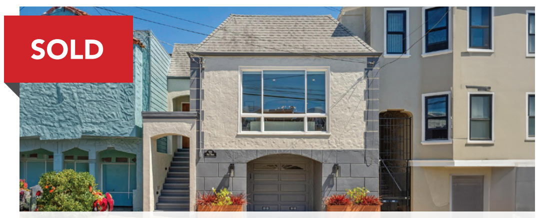

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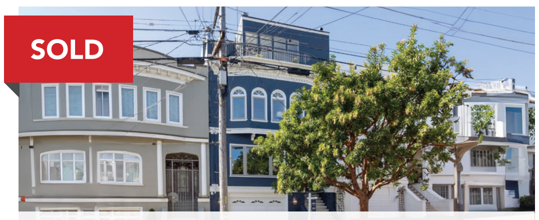

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Real Estate

John M. Lee

2024 Richmond R.E. Review

The single-family home prices in the Richmond District stabilized and rose after two years of decline with median prices increasing by 5.9% and the number of sales by 17.8% in 2024. Prices were pretty stable throughout the year as the Feds kept the interest rates steady, except for two quarter-point decreases later in the year. The Richmond Home Sales Comparison table shows the results in 2024 as compared with prior years, broken up by quarters.

The data were gathered from the San Francisco Association of Realtors' Multiple Listing Service and consist of single-family home sales in the Richmond, Lake, Presidio Heights, Jordan Park, Laurel Heights, Lone Mountain and Sea Cliff areas.

In 2024, there were 179 sales versus 152 for 2023 and 196 for 2022, a 17.8% increase from 2023 and a 10.2% decrease from 2022. The median sales price increased 5.9% to $2.15 million from 2023 to 2024, while it went down 11.7% from 2022 to 2023. The amount of marketing time to sell a home decreased to 13 days, or 35% shorter, indicating good demand for the Richmond.

If you analyze the attached chart, it shows prices went up the first three quarters and then dropped in the fourth quarter, somewhat coinciding with the change in mortgage rates, which dropped to about 6.25% before moving up to the 7% range at the end of the year. I would caution about coming to conclusions about quarterly trends as the number of sales are low and not statistically significant, meaning one or two sales can skew the numbers quite a bit. Since I started collecting data 25 years ago, this is the third-lowest number of sales in the Richmond District, except for 2009 with 135 sales, and last year at 152. We almost had nowhere to go but up.

In 2024, the major stock indexes did well, gaining about 14-33% at the writing of this article, with some turbulence toward the end of the year due to inflation and the Feds guidance that there might only be two small interest rate decreases in 2025. The consumer confidence index is holding steady. Our unemployment rate is hovering at 3% in San Francisco, which represents pretty much full employment. The 30-year mortgage interest rate has hovered in the 6-7% range and may come down a little more in 2025. Inflation is in the targeted 3% range.

The economy appears to be in a holding pattern waiting to see what happens during the next Trump administration. With Republicans in control, the economy tends to do well historically. But remember that real estate is a lagging economic indicator, meaning that it will follow the economy up, usually by about 6-12 months.

So, even though sales are still low, prices have stabilized and went up a little in 2024, perhaps signaling a bottom. Sellers are finally realizing that prices are lower and that interest rates really affect how buyers look at the market. Those who need to sell are making price adjustments and selling. However, many owners are making the decision to wait until the market gets better before putting properties on the market, thus limiting our listing inventory and sales. Buyers are getting accustomed to this interest rate range and making buying decisions based on it.

Locally, the demand in San Francisco and the Richmond District will continue to be OK. It is a desirable place to live, and prices have dropped which makes it more affordable. A somewhat unknown is how much the impending closure of the Upper Great Highway will have on prices in the Outer Richmond as that neighborhood will be more impacted as it will be harder to get in and out.

My prediction for 2025 is that we will continue to have a slow real estate market, but better than 2024. It will be a very balanced market between buyers and sellers. Inventory will still be pretty tight as owners who do not have to sell will continue to hold onto their properties until the market gets better.

Therefore, if you are contemplating buying into the real estate market, there will be opportunities. If you are planning on selling, keep in mind that the market is slow but improving, but if priced and marketed correctly, you should still get a pretty good price. If you want to reposition your real estate portfolio, this is an excellent time to do it and take advantage of less competition as the investment market is still very sluggish.

Wishing you all a happy new year and all the best in 2025!

John M. Lee is a broker with Compass specializing in the Richmond and Sunset districts. If you have any real estate questions, call him at 415-465-0505 or email johnlee@isellsf.com. Find an archive of his columns at RichmondSunsetNews.com.

RICHMOND HOME SALES COMPARISON

(By Quarter)

2022

# of Sales	Average Price	Median Price	Days on Market
47	$2,799,549	2,350,000	13
68	2,856,041	2,587,500	11
43	2,303,753	2,175,000	14
38	2,436,088	1,776,000	14
196	**2,639,910**	**2,300,000**	**13**
*-9.3%**	*-3.9%**	*-8.9%**	*18.2%**

* Percent change from previous year.

2023

# of Sales	Average Price	Median Price	Days on Market
25	2,736,880	2,518,000	13
45	3,124,677	2,330,050	16
33	2,355,667	2,000,000	19
49	2,711,822	1,750,000	24
152	**2,760,847**	**2,030,000**	**20**
-22.4%*	4.6%*	-11.7%*	53.8%*

2024

# of Sales	Average Price	Median Price	Days on Market
39	$2,880,962	1,860,000	10
53	2,674,132	2,285,000	15
42	3,410,815	2,562,500	13
45	2,350,653	1,950,000	15
179	**2,810,727**	**2,150,000**	**13**
*17.8%**	*1.8%**	*5.9%**	*-35.0%**

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Letters to the Editor

Editor:

The deployment of robocars in San Francisco reveals a troubling trend of technological "innovation" that prioritizes corporate profits over community well-being. While proponents claim autonomous vehicles will improve street safety, the reality is far more complex and problematic.

Waymo and similar companies have already deepened urban inequality. These robocars create more problems than they solve, causing significant issues for San Francisco's transportation ecosystem. Every day, over 600 robocars aimlessly prowl the City's streets, competing with thousands of ride-share vehicles and creating unprecedented congestion.

The most glaring issue is how these autonomous vehicles fundamentally disrupt urban mobility. Unlike traditional transportation, robocars spend hours wandering streets between passengers, dramatically increasing vehicle miles traveled without improving transportation efficiency. What used to be a 10-minute cross-town drive now takes 40 minutes, all because of these "four-wheel zombies" constantly blocking traffic.

Economic inequities are stark. Waymo is expensive and primarily accessible to affluent residents, effectively creating a two-tier transportation system. Requiring smartphone apps for access further marginalizes lower-income individuals, the elderly, and those uncomfortable with digital technology. Traditional taxi services have been nearly eliminated, removing more accessible transportation options.

The economic impact extends beyond convenience. Waymo and similar technologies actively destroy jobs without providing corresponding economic benefits. The revenue generated is funneled directly back to tech companies, leaving little economic advantage for the local community. These robocars contribute nothing to San Francisco's vibrant urban character and instead threaten to transform the city into a sterile, automated landscape.

Safety claims are equally dubious. Robocars' cautious programming actually creates more potential for accidents by disrupting normal traffic flow. By strictly adhering to speed limits and moving unpredictably, they frustrate human drivers and create dangerous bottlenecks. Police, fire and emergency vehicles are also significantly impeded.

Privacy concerns are another critical issue. These vehicles constantly gather data about passengers' movements, with no compensation or consent. The potential for data misuse by corporations, advertisers, or potentially government entities is substantial.

The broader context is a tech industry prioritizing profit over societal welfare. Waymo represents a solution searching for a problem, funded by venture capitalists eager to recoup investments in a fundamentally unnecessary technology. No city needs autonomous passenger cars – what we truly need are better public transit options like improved buses, trains and subways.

In conclusion, the deployment of robocars isn't an inevitable technological progression but a deliberate choice that undermines urban community, economic equity and traditional transportation infrastructure. San Francisco needs robocars "like a hole in the head" – it needs transportation solutions that genuinely serve all residents, not just the privileged few.

Tom Zimberoff

Editor:

On Dec. 10, 2024, the SF Board of Supervisors had a review of the SF Municipal Transportation Agency's decisions on overnight RV parking restrictions and have decided to reverse the decision made in October to ban or limit overnight parking.

Upon viewing the online video of the meeting, I noticed the only people who were in attendance were from nonprofits or the RV people. This meeting was not well publicized considering its importance; therefore, the citizen's voice went unheard. (https://sanfrancisco.granicus.com/player/clip/47999?view_id=10&meta_id=1105886&redirect=true.)

The first dozen RV owners seemed respectful to the neighborhood, but rapidly things got out of control. I spoke with the local city gardener who maintained the berm. She mentioned that she befriended several of the women and brought them supplies and removed their trash, but shortly thereafter she realized that it was just too dangerous.

The RV women disclosed that some of the new members of their enclave were raping them. She found gun casings, hypodermic needles, they were dumping their toilets in the street and it was reported that one of the people was chasing after another member of the group with an ax. Unfortunately, one of the drug dealers or pimps assaulted the gardener and gave her a brain injury.

Several of the RV people had hoarding impulses and would strew their treasures and waste into the streets. Some of the more aggressive members would stand in the street with their pit pulls and try to intimidate people from coming into their self-proclaimed area. And then came the marauding drug dealers and pimps in their fancy cars.

One of the RV people got mad at another RV person and committed arson to the RV. My nextdoor neighbor's house was broken into and she had to lock herself in the bathroom until the cops arrived as he had a knife. I now sleep with a knife near my bed and have feared going to work as the RVs were parked right in front of my home.

Former District 4 Supervisor Gordon Mar planned to create a 100+ RV triage center at the Zoo near the children's Pomeroy Rehabilitation Center. Gordon couldn't manage 10 RVs, let alone 100. Our district was renamed "Tenderloin West" under his watch. We only successfully got some of the inhabitants removed when it was uncovered that some of them weren't allowed near children or a school.

It isn't right that our City applies the laws differently to different groups of people and depending on whether the neighborhood is wealthy or not.

If the City/Bay Area truly cared, the RVs could have been temporarily housed at the abandoned movie theater lot at Stonestown instead of on Winston Drive, or purchased the 800-acre plot near a BART station in the East Bay for $5 million, which is significantly cheaper than $140,000 per parking spot at Candlestick Point, and then use the savings for water, sewer, trash removal, etc.

Let's make the streets in front of the supervisor's homes dedicated RV overnight zones until they come up with a rational and humane solution.

Michael Nohr

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Engardio Recall

Continued from page 1

ends.

This issue was made even more complicated when the SF Board of Supervisors unanimously voted in May 2024 to close the portion of the Great Highway south of Sloat Boulevard due to coastal erosion. While the highway no longer serves as a 100% direct route to Daly City for commuters, more than 14,000 drivers use the stretch from Lincoln to Sloat each day.

Budhai said the thought of a recall did not come up until Engardio, along with four other supervisors, introduced Proposition K to the ballot last summer. The stated justifications for the recall are that Engardio should have done more outreach to constituents before putting the proposition on the ballot and that Engardio should never have put it on the ballot.

Outside of this issue, Budhai admitted Engardio has had many accomplishments for the district.

"The night markets, fixing potholes and things like that. These are all wonderful things. Don't get me wrong," Budhai said. "But they're not the things that the community needs or relies on a daily basis. Drivers, commuters, they need to get back and forth from work to pick up and drop off their kids, and to get to hospital appointments.

"We feel that, as a leader of the community, you should have done some more outreach to your constituents, to your voters, to see how they would think or how they feel about you moving forward by putting this on the ballot for the entire City to vote on."

Proposition K passed with only an approximate 30-40% support rate in the westside districts.

In an email statement, Engardio wrote, "I'm humbled by the views of residents who opposed Prop K."

District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio may face a recall election over his efforts to close the Upper Great Highway to private vehicles. ***Photo by Michael Durand.***

Engardio responded to the accusation that he did not do enough outreach to voters.

"Many said they didn't feel heard in the process, and I take this feedback to heart," he said. "I'm hearing loud and clear that we need safer residential streets and better traffic flow. These are valid concerns, which I share. That's why I'm working with Mayor-elect Lurie to ensure key traffic improvements are made before implementing the Prop. K road closure."

Traffic improvements by the city are planned for the coming months.

Budhai claims that part of Engardio's initial election victory was due to his stance on keeping the Upper Great Highway compromise in place.

"It's an act of betrayal against all of the voters and his constituents," Budhai said. "A lot of folks were happy with the compromise and just said it is what it is. Let it be."

Engardio disputed this claim via email.

"I've always talked about the pending closure of the Great Highway south of Sloat due to coastal erosion and how it would create the opportunity for a permanent oceanside park. This language has been on my website and platform since my campaign in 2022."

Following the Board of Supervisors' May vote to close the southern end of Great Highway, Engardio addressed the fate of the Upper Great Highway running along the edge of the Sunset District.

"Clarity was needed about what to do with the middle section of the road. There were only two ways to resolve this issue: Either by the voters directly or by the 11 members of the Board of Supervisors," he said. "Either way, residents or supervisors on the east side would have a say. Rather than 11 supervisors deciding the future of our collective coast, a vote at the ballot box gave everyone a say. After all, the coast belongs to everyone."

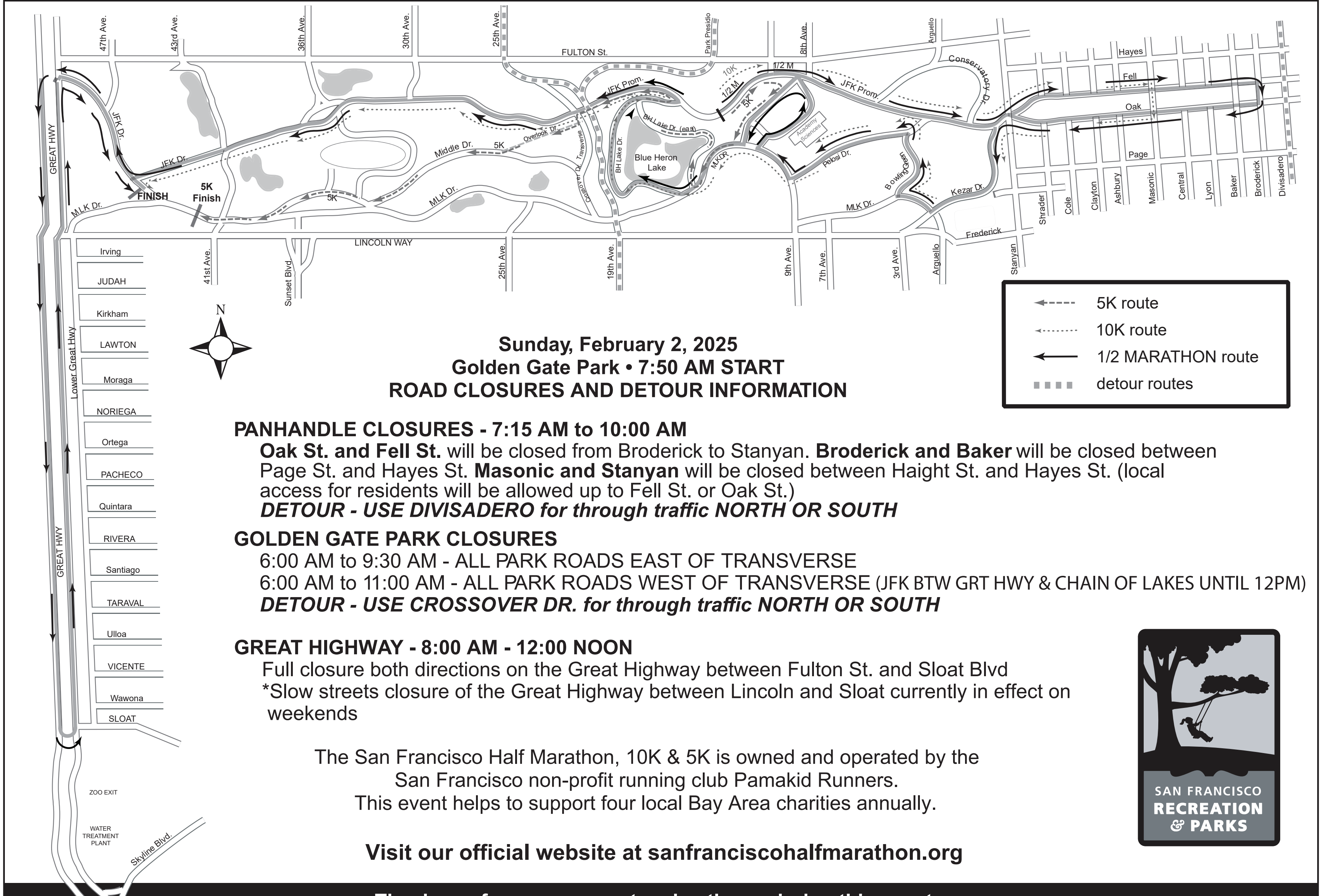
Engardio is in the process of releasing a "Stop the Engardio Recall" campaign and website.

"Not everyone agrees, however, that my role in Prop. K is a recallable offense," he stated. "I was one of five supervisors to put Prop. K to a democratic vote of the people. Voters have a democratic right to recall elected leaders, of course. But recalls should be reserved for elected officials who commit the most egregious offenses or who are unable or unwilling to fulfill the duties of their office. No matter the result, this recall will not change the outcome or implementation of Prop. K."

"We just need someone that really truly represents all of the district and not just a small minor group that he's advocating for right now. Ideally, we want to replace Joel Engardio with a supervisor that represents everyone," Budhai said.

Richard Corriea (right) draws media attention as he turns a petition signed by 80 Sunset District residents over to the SF Department of Elections on Dec. 3, 2024, to start the recall process against District 4 Supervisor Joel Engardio. ***Photo by Paul Kozakiewicz.***

San Francisco Half Marathon, 10K & 5K • presented by Pamakid Runners



FULTON St.
47th Ave.
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Park Presidio
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Arguello
Conservatory Dr.
Hayes
Fell
Oak
Page
JFK Dr.
JFK Prom.
1/2 M
10K
5K
Overlook Dr.
Middle Dr.
Transverse
Crossover Dr.
BH Lake Dr.
BH Lake Dr. (east)
Blue Heron Lake
MLK Dr.
Academy Sciences
Pelosi Dr.
Bowling Green
Kezar Dr.
Frederick
GREAT HWY
FINISH
5K Finish
LINCOLN WAY
41st Ave.
Sunset Blvd.
25th Ave.
19th Ave.
9th Ave.
7th Ave.
3rd Ave.
Arguello
Stanyan
Shrader
Cole
Clayton
Ashbury
Masonic
Central
Lyon
Baker
Broderick
Divisadero
Irving
JUDAH
Kirkham
LAWTON
Moraga
NORIEGA
Ortega
PACHECO
Quintara
RIVERA
Santiago
TARAVAL
Ulloa
VICENTE
Wawona
SLOAT
Lower Great Hwy
ZOO EXIT
WATER TREATMENT PLANT
Skyline Blvd.
N

◂- - - - 5K route
◂········ 10K route
◂—— 1/2 MARATHON route
▪ ▪ ▪ ▪ detour routes

Sunday, February 2, 2025
Golden Gate Park • 7:50 AM START
ROAD CLOSURES AND DETOUR INFORMATION

PANHANDLE CLOSURES - 7:15 AM to 10:00 AM

Oak St. and Fell St. will be closed from Broderick to Stanyan. **Broderick and Baker** will be closed between Page St. and Hayes St. **Masonic and Stanyan** will be closed between Haight St. and Hayes St. (local access for residents will be allowed up to Fell St. or Oak St.)

DETOUR - USE DIVISADERO for through traffic NORTH OR SOUTH

GOLDEN GATE PARK CLOSURES

6:00 AM to 9:30 AM - ALL PARK ROADS EAST OF TRANSVERSE
6:00 AM to 11:00 AM - ALL PARK ROADS WEST OF TRANSVERSE (JFK BTW GRT HWY & CHAIN OF LAKES UNTIL 12PM)
DETOUR - USE CROSSOVER DR. for through traffic NORTH OR SOUTH

GREAT HIGHWAY - 8:00 AM - 12:00 NOON

Full closure both directions on the Great Highway between Fulton St. and Sloat Blvd
*Slow streets closure of the Great Highway between Lincoln and Sloat currently in effect on weekends

The San Francisco Half Marathon, 10K & 5K is owned and operated by the San Francisco non-profit running club Pamakid Runners.
This event helps to support four local Bay Area charities annually.

SAN FRANCISCO RECREATION & PARKS

Visit our official website at sanfranciscohalfmarathon.org

Thank you for your support and patience during this event.
If you have any questions or concerns, would like to participate in the run, or volunteer to assist with the event please contact us by email at raceinfo@sanfranciscohalfmarathon.org

Lunar New Year

Year of the Serpent

February 8

Now in its 25th year, our annual event begins with preconcert lobby festivities and entertainment. The concert, conducted by Francesco Lecce-Chong and featuring cellist Amos Yang and pipa player Wu Man, draws upon a wide range of Asian traditions to commemorate the holiday.

Continue the festivities after the concert by purchasing a ticket to the dramatic and glamorous banquet. Elevated experiences are available. Call **415.503.5351** for more details.

This concert is presented in partnership with
sfac san francisco arts commission

The commissioning of Shuying LI's new work is supported by **the Ralph I. Dorfman Commissioning Fund**.

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More Winter Wonders

James Gaffigan & Ray Chen
Jan 9–11

***Carmina burana* & Adams' Piano Concerto**
Jan 16, 18–19

Also sprach Zarathustra
Jan 24–25

Blomstedt Conducts Schubert & Brahms
Jan 30–Feb 1

Järvi Conducts Mahler 7
Feb 6–9

Commentary

Quentin L. Kopp

In One Year and Out the Other

It's a New Year and you can count the herculean resolutions of all San Franciscans from Mayor-Elect Daniel Lurie to your humble but not always pleasing scribe. Remember that a New Year's resolution is something that goes in one year and out the other!

We could begin the school year by emphasizing ROTC and occupational trade courses to San Francisco high schools which have abandoned them. ROTC constitutes a pre-enlistment advantage for those who graduate high school and enlist in the Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines or Coast Guard, all of which currently are understaffed as we confront Russia, China and other unfriendly nations.

Vocational education in this technology age represents a required learning process for high school students who don't need college with its attendant costs. Machinery and tools also are relevant to industrial and agricultural livelihoods. I recall my birthplace, Syracuse, N.Y. One of the six public high schools in a city with 210,000 residents was Vocational High School, many of whose students even went to college after graduating.

We begin 2025 with a new mayor and seven new supervisors, plus a deficit of more than $800 million looming in the 2025-2026 budget. As of July 2024, our City Hall saviors on the second floor constituting the Board of Supervisors received $170,430 annually and their four legislative assistants drew $145,236 without any civil service exam needed. For once, however, they've joined in their tax money clamor by San Mateo County's five-member Board of Supervisors which sets its own salary and is now seeking $195,782 plus benefits. As longtime readers know, until 1996, San Francisco voters, who pay the second floor City Hall intellectuals, had to approve by a majority vote any salary increase. In 1981, the salary was (and had been since 1962!) $9,324 annually. As board president, I asked Budget Analyst Harvey Rose to calculate the cost-of-living increase since 1962 and secured passage of an ordinance for voter approval to increase our salary accordingly. The voters approved the increase for the "Mighty Eleven" who serve residents, not the other way around. For our current heroes, it's "Katie, Bar The Door."

The current starting 11 are successors to those earlier stalwarts who made San Francisco a "sanctuary city," meaning our police and other civil service city employees must protect illegal immigrants (about 38,000 in number). City employees cannot report illegal aliens to federal authorities whose responsibility it is to evict such lawbreakers from the USA. They're not "undocumented" aliens, as the media takes pride in identifying them. They've broken our laws.

In some U.S. cities, illegal aliens are a favored class. Chicago gives them housing entitlements and provides apartments for them and lets them work "under the table." Guess who suffers the most – it's Chicago's black citizens. I await President-Elect Donald Trump's assurance his administration will expel America's millions of illegal invaders. Let's see if he's all talk like his predecessors. Let's see what a new mayor and seven new supervisors will do about abolishing S.F.'s "Sanctuary City" status.

Even with illegal aliens, San Francisco's population declined by about 2,000 in 2024. Gov. Gavin Newsom's vaunted home-building crusade has fallen short. As a putative 2028 presidential candidate, he's been unable to deliver on that promise. Meanwhile, Park Merced's empty apartments invite placement of homeless people. Stonestown hasn't begun building any of the 325 or so apartments for which it secured Planning Department permits nearly four years ago and the Irish Cultural Center and its proposed Sloat Boulevard neighbor with a planned 50 stories of rental housing are still "in the barn." (Those 50 stories have since been reduce to 35.) Why? It's the market and a declining number of San Francisco residents.

I have some 2025 resolutions to fulfill, including abolition of ranked-choice voting, district elections of supervisors (which little Menlo Park had crammed down residents' throats in 2017), and stopping "deputy mayors" by calling them "policy directors" at Room 200 in City Hall. Regarding district supervisorial elections, the Palo Alto Daily Post editor labels Menlo Park, "The city where democracy is dying."

In the spirit of a new year, I bring readers the wisdom of Great Britain's former prime minister, Margaret Thatcher, to wit: "The problem with socialism is that you eventually run out of other people's money."

Quentin Kopp is a former San Francisco supervisor, state senator, SF Ethics Commission member, president of the California High Speed Rail Authority governing board and retired Superior Court judge.

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Matisse's 'Jazz' at de Young

Continued from page 1

the most vibrant and dynamic works of his career.

He no longer had the mobility to paint or sculpt. However, Matisse reinvented himself by turning to "drawing with scissors," which he had secretly experimented with in the past. The cut-out technique was innovative – his invention. It was the first time cut-outs were used as a medium, rather than as a tool. His assistants helped prepare the paper in vibrant colors using gouache (opaque watercolor paint) and he cut it into simple shapes that would be arranged as decoupage and collages to his liking.

While working on "Jazz," Matisse was often in pain and was plagued with various ailments, including liver problems, deteriorating vision and insomnia. The silver lining of his chronic insomnia greatly informed the composition of "Jazz." Working with artificial light at night led to nighttime scenes, including figures surrounded by deep blue-sky hues.

Natalia Lauricella, curator of Prints and Drawings at the FAMSF. ***Photo by Noma Faingold.***

The imagery of "Jazz" combines whimsical with themes of horror. The viewer can interpret each plate in different ways. Matisse was apolitical while living in Southern France during the war. But there are references to figures of that time, such as in the piece, "The Wolf."

"He had family members in the resistance. He felt anxiety and despair," Lauricella said. "The symbolism of 'The Wolf' is the Nazi Gestapo. 'The Wolf' has a menacing head and a purple background."

"The Nightmare of the White Elephant," with its jagged red slashes that pierce the elephant balancing precariously on a small ball, may reflect how isolated Matisse felt trapped in his physical confinement and in his life as a driven, anxious artist. In the "Jazz" text, he writes, "An artist must never be a prisoner. Prisoner? An artist should never be a prisoner of himself, prisoner of style, prisoner of reputation, prisoner of success, etc."

Lauricella's goals in mounting the "Matisse Jazz Unbound" exhibit is "to show how inventive he was and interested in printing and in making artist books," she said. "He was a true multimedia artist."

In the second paragraph of "Jazz," Matisse made his intentions clear in the oversized cursive text.

"All that I really have to recount are observations and notes made during the course of my life as a painter," he wrote. "I ask those who will have the patience to read these notes the indulgence usually granted to the writings of painters."

"Matisse Jazz Unbound" will be exhibited Jan. 25-July 6, at the de Young Museum, 50 Hagiwara Tea Garden Drive. Learn more at famsf.org.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

CAR FOR SALE

2008 VW Beetle for sale. Like-new. Great body, white interior, good black paint, brand new tires from Costco, doesn't smoke or burn oil, engine runs great, $4,200. Clean title, clean car in SF. 805-455-9520.

CLEMENT STREET ART WALK

Clement Street Art Walk is a monthly community evening event bringing local art to the small businesses on Clement Street. Listen to live music, mingle with your neighbors and enjoy local artists featured at your favorite small businesses while you shop local. Every third Thursday of the month, 5-8 p.m. on Clement Street from Arguello Boulevard to Park Presidio Boulevard (and beyond). Learn more at clementstreetsf.com.

COMMENTARIES AND LETTERS

From the editor: All commentaries we publish are the opinions of the writers and should not be considered our editorial stances on issues. We strive to remain neutral and offer a balance of viewpoints. We invite readers who wish to express their opinions to send a letter to the editor to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Word limit for the newspaper is 350, for the website, 500. RichmondSunsetNews.com.

FELTON TECH SQUAD

Felton's Tech Squad is providing free basic tech support for older adults and people with disabilities in the Richmond District. Ask questions regarding how to navigate your smartphone, tablet or laptop. Drop-in for one-on-one session in English at the Richmond Branch Library (351 Ninth Ave.) on Friday, Jan. 10, 1:30-3 p.m. We are also seeking volunteers who speak English and/or Cantonese. For more information, call 415-474-1558 or email techsquad@felton.org. The Tech Squad is now introducing basic tech classes for older adults and adults with disabilities in Cantonese on Tuesdays 12:30-2 p.m. at the Richmond Senior Center (6221 Geary Blvd., third floor). For more information, call 415- 961-7043 or email sf-connected@felton.org.

FOOD PANTRY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

The Richmond Neighborhood Center is seeking dedicated volunteers to help at our food pantries. Assist us in providing essential support to families in need. Sign up today at richmondsf.org/get-involved/volunteer.

FREE EVENTS AT THE SF PUBLIC LIBRARY, RICHMOND BRANCH
351 NINTH AVE., 415-355-5600

CHILDREN/FAMILY PROGRAMS:

"Storytime: For Babies." Playtime follows directly after the Storytime. Limited to 46 participants, tickets required. Mondays 11-11:30 a.m.

"Storytime: For Toddlers." Playtime follows directly after Storytime. Limited to 46 participants, tickets required. Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 11-11:30 a.m.

"Activity: Lego Free Play." Build skyscrapers, forts, castles or whatever your imagination desires with LEGO. For ages 5 and older. Tuesday, Jan. 7, 3:30-5 p.m.

PROGRAMS FOR TWEENS/TEENS:

"Workshop: Mini Nicho Folk Art." Decorate a miniature shadow box reflecting a loved one, pet, memory, dream or aspirations. For Ages 10-18. Space is limited. Reservations required: 415-355-5648. Thursday, Jan. 9, 4-6 p.m.

"T(w)een Winter Read." Cozy up with a book over winter break and join the best tween and teen winter reading program in the Bay Area. Tag your favorites on Instagram and include #themixatsfpl. For ages 10-18. Ends Jan. 10.

PROGRAMS FOR ALL AGES:

"Performance: Kathak Dance with SF Kala Kendra." Learn about Kathak Dance, one of the eight major forms of Indian classical dance. Participate and learn a few moves from this centuries-old North Indian art form. Saturday, Jan. 4, 3-4 p.m.

"Refuse Refuse: Neighborhood Cleanup and Storytime." Led by community member Vince Yuen, meet at the 10th Avenue door of the Richmond Library to help with neighborhood clean-up. Every second Tuesday of the month. Tuesday, Jan. 14, 3:30-4:30 p.m.

"Performance: Lion Dancing with Jing Mo Athletic Association." Celebrate the Year of the Snake with a Lion Dance performance by Jing Mo Athletic Association. Learn more about the rich heritage of Lunar New Year traditions, see a spectacular martial arts demonstration and touch a piece of lucky lettuce to start your year off right. Saturday, Jan. 25, 11:15-11:45 a.m.

ADULT PROGRAMS:

"Breath meditation and Gentle Yoga with Don Narin." Guided meditation for calming and joint stress release with a gentle form of yoga that anyone can do. No movement beyond what is comfortable for you. Very relaxing and calming. Every Thursday, 11 a.m.-noon.

"Read Together, Silent Book Club." Bring any book (fiction or nonfiction) for a period of silent reading followed by a discussion when you share what you are reading with others. The club meets every other Wednesday. Jan. 8 and 22, 3-5 p.m.

"Tutorial: Drop-In Tech Support for Older Adults with the Felton Institute Tech Squad." Get one-on-one help with your phone or tablet, searching the internet, setting up an email account and other basic computer tasks. Cantonese-speaking Tech Squad members are available to assist, Friday, Jan. 10, 1:30-3 p.m.

"Workshop: CYC Disaster Preparedness Cycle Training." Do not let earthquakes catch you off guard! Come to all three Disaster Preparedness workshops to learn about earthquake preparedness. Attendees who complete all three workshops will receive a free disaster preparedness kit. Register at the Reference Desk or call 415-355-5600 to attend. Post disaster: How to recover from the disaster: cycsf.org/program/csop/, Tuesday, Jan. 14, 6-7 p.m.

"Workshop: Chinese Calligraphy." Celebrate the Year of the Snake with local renowned artist Oscar Zhang and learn the basic skills to write Chinese calligraphy and Chinese Festival Couplets. Space is limited. Reservations required: 415-355-5600 or sign up at the Reference Desk. Tuesday, Jan. 21, 2:30-4 p.m.

FREE WALKING GROUP FOR SENIORS

Join the friendly San Francisco 55+ Neighborhood Walks. These free walks are leisurely, not vigorous, accommodating seniors with various walking abilities. To sign up, go to meetup.com/sf-55-neighborhood-walking-groups/. You can see who else is walking. You are also welcome if you just show up in person. The walks meet weekly, except when it rains and sometimes on holidays – check the Meetup link for the latest updates. The walks vary from one hour to two hours and you can leave at any time.

- Tuesday walks start at noon at Angelina's Cafe, 6000 California St., at 22nd Avenue in the Richmond District and goes to Lands End and back.
- Friday walks start at 10 a.m. in front of the Forest Hill Club House at 391 Magellan St. and tours that beautiful neighborhood.
- Sunday walks start at 1 p.m. at Java Beach by the Zoo at 2650 Sloat Blvd. in the Outer Sunset and goes along the Upper Great Highway from Sloat Boulevard to Judah Street and back. Dogs are allowed at the Ocean Beach walk.

Every walk is located where there is a public bathroom either at the starting place or on the route.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Happy January birthday to Rachel Eileen Abbott, Lois Anderson, Kyle Buckley, Jailene Calfayan, Haley Craig, Mark Craig, Chiara Di Martino, Alex and Alice Doliner, Ilze Earner, Benjamin Johnson, Caroline King, Kyle Kisor, Gabrielle Macapinlac, Alexander Mullaney, Phyllis Nabhan, Kiran Nagaraja, Olivia Neel, Renata Ruby Rhodes, Caley Rittman, Sarah Roberts, Natalie Rodier, Linda Shore, Bonnie Sill, Nelly Soncuya, Adriana Sosa, Cesar Tesen, Shirley Yip and Jeremy Wong. *To add a name to the monthly birthday list, email Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Free.*

MOSTLY BRITISH FILM FESTIVAL

The 17th annual Mostly British Film Festival returns to the Vogue Theatre Feb. 6-13, offering a celebration of British cinema with 26 films, special events and distinguished guest appearances. Highlights include an interview with Hugh Bonneville, the beloved Earl of Grantham from "Downton Abbey," and a sneak preview of "Paddington in Peru," the third installment of the popular franchise. The festival also honors Maggie Smith with screenings of "From Time to Time" and "A Room with a View." Other notable films include "Shoshana," a romantic thriller by Michael Winterbottom, and "The Penguin Lessons," starring Steve Coogan. Additional features include "Falling Into Place," "Swing Bout" and "Made in England," as well as a special Zoom interview with the director of "Never Look Away." Tickets are available at mostlybritish.org and the Vogue box office, with series passes, individual tickets and discounted rates for various groups available. For more information, visit mostlybritish.org.

REFUSE REFUSE CLEANUPS

Friday, Jan. 3, 8-9 a.m., Morning Coffee Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/513212/.
Friday, Jan. 3, 3:30-5 p.m., Clement Street Happy Hour Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/437706/.
Saturday, Jan. 4, 10-11:30 a.m., KEEP Ocean Beach Clean, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/399341/.
Thursday, Jan. 9, 10 a.m.-noon, Fort Miley Cleanup and Workday, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/641163/.
Saturday, Jan. 11, 10-11:30 a.m., KEEP Ocean Beach Clean, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/399341/.
Tuesday, Jan. 14, 3:30-4:30 p.m., Richmond Library Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/553131/.
Thursday, Jan. 16, 10 a.m.-noon, Fort Miley Cleanup and Workday, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/641163/.
Thursday, Jan. 16, 10:30 a.m.-noon, Rise and Grind Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/413075/.
Saturday, Jan. 18, 11 a.m.–1 p.m., Central Richmond Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/613409/.
Saturday, Jan. 18, 10-11:30 a.m., KEEP Ocean Beach Clean, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/399341/.
Thursday, Jan. 23, 10 a.m.-noon, Fort Miley Cleanup and Workday, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/641163/.
Saturday, Jan. 25, 10 a.m.-noon, Richmond District Cleanup, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/441884/.
Saturday, Jan. 25, 10-11:30 a.m., KEEP Ocean Beach Clean, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/399341/.
Thursday, Jan. 30, 10 a.m.-noon, Fort Miley Cleanup and Workday, mobilize.us/togethersf/event/641163/.

STAMP COLLECTOR AND STAMP COLLECTIONS

Stamp collector is buying stamps and stamp collections. I am buying "older stamps" from the 1800s to 1930. American Philatelic Society member since 1986. Pictures are appreciated. Call or text message 415-533-0761.

THANK YOU!

Sincere thanks to the readers who generously donated to the Richmond Review and those who signed up on the Patreon funding campaign. Your contributions helps keep us financially healthy. If you signed up or donated and haven't received Richmond Review branded products (tote bag, pens, coffee mug, hat or shirt), please send an email to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. We would also like to share just your name in the paper to thank you. Please let us know if that is OK. To donate, please visit our website to sign up for our Patreon campaign, send a check to Richmond Review, P.O. Box 16035, SF, CA, 94116 or send via PayPal to Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com. Thank you!

Announcements: $1 per word, 20 word minimum. Share birthday greetings, weddings, anniversaries, births, obituaries, graduations, sports highlights, business accomplishments, retirements, college admissions, etc.

Announcements run in the Richmond Review and Sunset Beacon newspapers (36,200 copies) and on RichmondSunsetNews.com (average of 20,000 views per month). Ads must be pre-paid. Deadline: 22nd of the month. Mail check to: P.O.

Continued on page 11

Cal's Pet Supply
Cal's Pet Supply
Mon-Sat: 11:00am - 6:00pm
Sunday: 11:00am - 5:00pm
Happy New Year friends and neighbors.
Thank you for supporting local businesses!
Bring in this ad for $5 off your purchase of $25 or more!
Limit one per customer • Cannot be applied to Orijen or Acana • Expires Jan. 31, 2025
5950 California Street @ 22nd Avenue • 415-386-1720

Press Release

SF Environment Department

Tree Recycling Information

For more than 30 years, San Francisco's Christmas trees have been collected and recycled in a safe and environmentally friendly way.

It's time to turn the page on 2024 and prepare to say goodbye to our Christmas trees.

With the beginning of the new year, a long-practiced holiday tradition of sustainable tree recycling returns to San Francisco. City officials from the San Francisco Environment Department (SFE) and San Francisco Public Works remind residents that Recology will collect their unadorned Christmas trees from Jan. 2 to Jan. 17. Recology will chip and grind the trees, and the recycled trees will be used in the compost process.

"Christmas trees are the gift that keeps on giving," said Director of the San Francisco Environment Department Tyrone Jue. "They sequester carbon as they grow, bring warmth and joy into our homes during the holidays, and when we tree-cycle them, we help to restore soil health and support natural landscapes."

Recycling your Christmas tree is easy. Between Jan. 2 and 17, place your tree next to your curbside collection bins the night before your scheduled collection day. Please position your tree so it can be easily spotted by the Recology crew exclusively collecting trees. It is very important to remove all decorations, tinsel, nails, stands and lights – anything that had been added to the natural tree. Your tree must be as bare, empty and natural as the day you purchased it! That way, there will be no contaminants in the compost.

If your tree measures more than six feet tall, please cut it in half. Trees should not be placed in a plastic bag. Trees will be collected curbside by a separate truck on your regularly scheduled collection day. Natural wreaths can be collected as well, but all metal wires or frames must be removed.

The collected Christmas trees will be transported to Recology's Jepson Prairie Organics composting facility, near Vacaville. Recology workers will feed the trees into a large grinder. The smallest pieces of ground trees will be combined with other compostable material, such as food scraps, sticks and leaves, and composted. Woody pieces of ground-up Christmas trees will become part of the biofilter system at the composting facility.

"Christmas trees are an age-old tradition that symbolize joy, but once the trees come down after the holiday season, they should be disposed of properly, so they don't become a sidewalk hazard," said Public Works Director Carla Short. "The tree-cycle program helps keep our neighborhoods clean and safe. It keeps the trees out of the landfill by fully utilizing them in the composting process."

"We collect nearly 300 tons of Christmas trees in San Francisco. Let's send them to the composting facility for beneficial reuse. Please put your tree at the curb, next to your bins, on your scheduled collection day during the first two weeks of January. Recology will pick up your Christmas tree and make sure it gets recycled," said Robert Reed, spokesperson for Recology.

The winter holidays are San Francisco's largest recycling weeks of the year. Christmas tree recycling helps keep San Francisco clean and green by reducing materials sent to landfill and preventing improper disposal and illegal dumping.

It is also important for safety reasons to recycle your tree during the first two weeks of January.

"In just a few seconds, even a well-watered Christmas tree can catch fire and create a dangerous hazard," said the San Francisco Fire Department. "By properly disposing of the trees, you remove this hazard. Be SFFD safe this holiday season and properly dispose of your trees and other natural decorations."

The City also wants to remind residents to take extra care and properly sort their recyclables during the giving season. Utilize the blue recycling bin for all bottles, cans, paper and other recyclables. Flatten all cardboard boxes to save space you will need in your recycling bin for extra material. Ribbons, twines and Styrofoam packing cubes go in the landfill bin. Please visit SFRecycles.org for additional guidance to be better at the bin.

Additional information is available online at Recology.com. Residents and businesses can contact Recology at CustomerService@RecologySF.com or call 415-330-1300.

Pet Pix

WALT AND JESSE

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Continued from page 9

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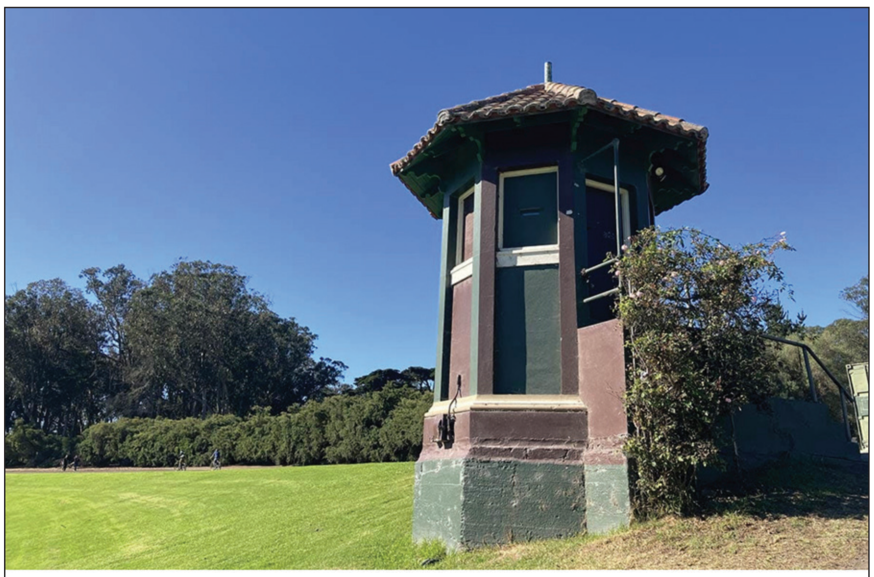
Happy NewYear!

San Francisco Story

Woody LaBounty

Ponies of the Past



Cute eight-sided tower in Golden Gate Park's Polo Fields. No coffee available...

Several months ago, we got through Golden Gate Park's concert season, and the grassy meadows and fields were in recovery mode from the stages, tents, beer stalls and tens of thousands of tromping, dancing feet of the Outside Lands and Hardly Strictly Bluegrass festivals.

How many of those music lovers wondered if polo had ever really been played on the Polo Fields, what the heck its strange eight-sided tower was for and why wasn't someone selling some decent pour-over coffee out of it?

I can answer the first two questions. You'll have to ask the Recreation and Park Department about the coffee question. Seems like a good idea to me.

The Sporting Set

We fight over whether people should be able to drive in Golden Gate Park or whether it should be turned over to slower, more human-powered activities. It is not a new issue.

The first fine paths and lanes created in the 1870s attracted speeding carriages, buggies, phaetons, surreys and the annoying Tesla drivers of the day: Young men who wanted to show off and race each other on horseback. These guys would totally gallop past you in the restricted bus lane today.

Another not-new issue: People with money can usually get what they want in Golden Gate Park.

In the late 1880s, a group of wealthy sporting men tired of being chided for running over be-bustled women and petticoated children convinced the Park Commission to create a straight, flat "speed track" just for their racing.

They did this using one of the oldest tricks in the book, one that still works today. If the City created it as a benefit to "the people," they, the rich guys, promised to pay for its upkeep, improvements, etc.

As usual, the commissioners fell for it.

The speed track ran roughly from Rainbow Falls at today's John F. Kennedy Drive straight southwest through Speedway Meadow (now officially Hellman Hollow, but let's pretend that awkward rechristening never happened, shall we?) and on along what is now the southern boundary of the Polo Fields through "little" Speedway Meadow on the west and ending just past where the Bercut Equitation circle is today.

Must have been fun, and it is a great origin story for the name Speedway Meadow.

The rich guys and the park commission could never agree upon a satisfactory maintenance plan and soon all were on to another great idea. How about an American version of the Roman Coliseum in the park?

The Stadium

The idea of lions eating Christians probably wasn't floated during Park Commission meetings, but chariot races might have been. Because as much fun as racing in a straight line on horseback was, the real sport for lovers of the track in the 19th century was harness racing.

You know, guys with whips perched on little gigs going around in circles. It was the NASCAR stock car circuit of the time.

Because it was a shocking disgrace that a world-class city like San Francisco didn't have a proper track in its public park, rich men pushed for the creation of one and even pledged, even pinky promised, to raise the money for a stadium if the City would just get it started.

Yep, the Park Commission fell for it again. At least this time it did get some money from the racers, using $20,000 from the Amateur Driving Association to help create what we today know as the Polo Fields. The big dedication ceremony was held three months after the 1906 earthquake and fire.

The hobbies of the wealthy also included another equine activity – polo. You and I might play at being well-to-do by golfing, but wheat is separated from chaff when you start talking about investing in polo ponies.

Polo had been played on Golden Gate Park's Big Rec field in the 1890s. By 1904, the plutocrat set began constructing dedicated polo fields in San Mateo and Burlingame.

Rudolph Spreckels became seriously bitten by the polo bug, and since his brother, Adolph B. Spreckels, was the chair of San Francisco's Park Commission, polo was promised to be a major use of the new stadium. And, of course, the polo-ists promised to kick in funding.

The harness racers could speed around the mile oval and the polo ponies could romp in the bowl, and all the rich horse owners would be benefactors of the big project. That was the general idea.

In 1907, the City received a donation to build an octagonal judge's stand for the finish line of the harness race track, a perch to make decisions on close finishes.

The Amateur Driving Club kicked in money to build the first section of concrete bleachers across from the judge's stand in April 1909, the big start to the Reid Brothers architects' 150,000-seat California version of the Colosseum.

But that was it for the Colosseum plan. For most of my lifetime that hulk of seats, stranded a mile away from any action on the grassy bowl of the polo fields, was a mysterious piece of random detritus apparently dropped there by alien visitors.

The concrete bleachers proved handy in 1911 for the ground-breaking ceremony of the 1915 Panama Pacific International Exposition, when President William Howard Taft turned a spade of earth beside the judge's stand. In the end, however, almost all the fair's activities were in today's Marina District, where a whole new temporary stadium and track were constructed.

Finishing or improving a project just doesn't attract the big bucks, then or now.

Anyway, that's where the tower came from, part of a plan to host horse races that didn't quite take off because rich people have short attention spans and new diversions came on the scene.

Polo Anyone?

Polo players, it turned out, didn't want to bring their ponies up to San Francisco and kept their games on fine club fields on the peninsula.

Harness racing had a heyday at the new stadium, but died away as raising and racing horses gave way to tinkering with and driving gas-powered machines.

By the 1920s, Colosseum dreams shifted to a new popular sport called football. It was called a shocking disgrace that a world-class city like San Francisco didn't have a proper modern venue for the sport (here we go again), and rather than adapt the 15-year-old oval along the old Speed Track, a whole new project, Kezar Stadium, was erected on the old park nursery near Stanyan and Haight streets.

Polo finally came back to the park in 1922, when the local subcommittee of the American Polo Association wanted to make the sport more "accessible" and arranged a few matches at the old stadium.

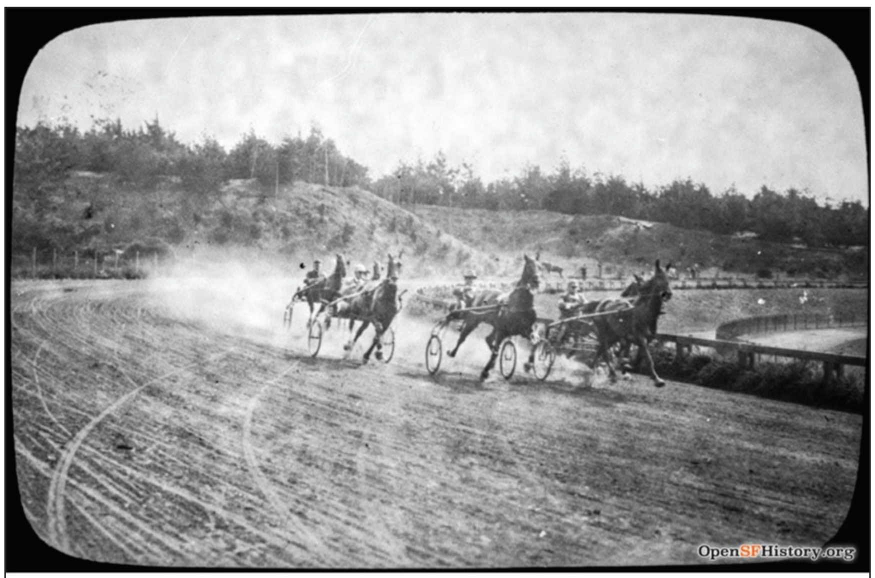
Once Kezar was constructed and the park nominally had two stadiums, the name "Polo Fields" became commonly used for the older field in the western half of Golden Gate Park.

The local polo folks were instrumental in getting the bowl's wooden bleachers installed. Matches were played off and on there through the 1930s, 1940s and 1950s, along with bicycle races, soccer, marching bands, model airplane tournaments, rugby matches, prayer rallies, and later rock concerts.

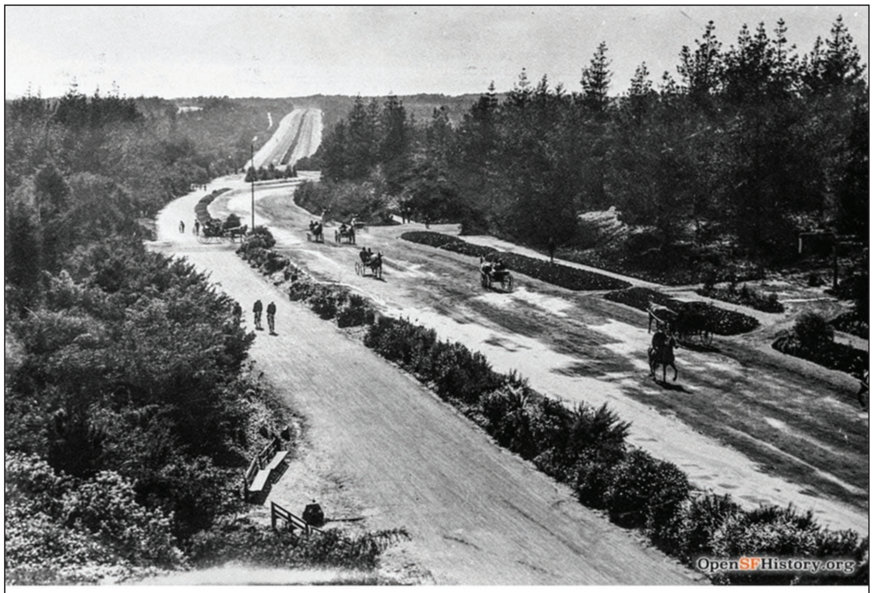
I believe it has been about 60 years since a polo pony trotted on the turf.

Historian Woody LaBounty was born and lives in the Richmond District and has spent most of his life on San Francisco's west side. LaBounty and a friend started the Western Neighborhoods Project (WNP). After he retired from his position as WNP's executive director, he moved over to San Francisco Heritage where he is the president and CEO.

This story and photos with captions were reprinted with permission by LaBounty. To read more and sign up for his weekly newsletters, go to sanfranciscostory.com.



Harness race on the outer track of the Polo Fields, circa 1910. (OpenSFHistory / wnp33.03913)



Speed track in Golden Gate Park, 1890s. (OpenSFHistory/wnp33.00934)

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RV Housing Dilemma

Continued from page 1

lessness live in their vehicles," said Gabriel Medina, executive director for La Raza Community Resource Center, when he addressed the Board on behalf of the appellants. "With the high rents in San Francisco and job losses during the pandemic, many turn to RVs as their only option. RV parks are common in other parts of the state, but San Francisco doesn't really have this as a sustainable option. So, people end up in an RV on the street."

Medina said the SFMTA was asking families to trade in their RVs for shelter space.

"The Buena Vista-Horace Mann Stay-over Program is one of the only readily available shelters for families but they have to turn families away. Families have to sleep on the floor of the gym but the shelter closes at 7 a.m. and doesn't reopen until 7 p.m."

"We're not just discussing towing a vehicle; we are discussing towing a home with all of its contents, including critical documentation," said Erica Wang during public comment. "Once we take away the last of their wealth, the ability to retrieve it becomes very difficult, resulting in more families being forced to live on the streets."

"You are just moving the mess around; the mess that you created," said Jamie Lang of the Homeless Prenatal Program. "And every day that goes by, HSH (Homelessness and Supportive Housing) is over here getting strategic on how they lower the numbers of folks on the shelter wait list, like changing who is eligible and quietly just taking people off the wait list for no reason at all.

"These punitive measures are not a solution. Housing is a solution," Lang said.

"This policy is hanging us out to dry," said Hope Kramer, director of strategic initiatives at Compass Family Services. "We have no shelter beds left. We have no housing vouchers left. It is a lie that the Safer Families Plan funds enough subsidies to meet this need.

"To force families from fragile stability into situations of unsheltered homelessness while failing to add money to the shelter system is lazy policy making," she said. "It is falling into the trap of punishing poverty that drains our limited resources and quietly and bureaucratically ruins the lives of predominantly poor, BIPOC mothers. You know this punishment will not work. Jeffrey Tumlin knows this will not work."

It turns out that the outgoing MTA Director Tumlin does know about being homeless.

As one advocate pointed out, it was at an SFMTA Board of Directors meeting on March 3, 2020, that Tumlin spoke about his arrival in San Francisco.

"When I first moved to San Francisco, I lived in my car," Tumlin said. "Living in my car meant I had a place to keep my stuff dry and to sleep safely.

"And washing up at the gas station, I could make myself presentable, such that it was possible for me to convince a landlord into renting me an apartment even though I was unemployed," he said. "That in turn allowed me to have temp work. If my car had been towed during those weeks of living in my car, I probably wouldn't be here today."

River Rudolph of the Westside Tenants Association said those hoping that bans like this will drive homeless people out of San Francisco will be disappointed.

"This is not going to cause them to leave San Francisco," Rudolph said. "They have connections here. They have jobs here. They have resources here. They have family here. They are not going to leave San Francisco."

Yet Viktoriya Wise, the SFMTA's Streets Division director, told the board there really is not much of a choice but to allow towing RVs as an option. They had been restricting more and more RV parking, but then they stopped when the pandemic hit.

"The city streets simply do not contain the facilities we need to manage trash and human waste that's generated, along with long-term vehicular habitation," Wise said. "Until there is a clear indication of meaningful enforcement, such as having your vehicle towed, people don't always want to accept shelter and our other services."

She calls the new policy "a tool of last resort."

One of the three supervisors voting against the appeal was District 8 Supervisor Raphael Mandelman, who offered a different perspective.

He called some of the advice given by advocates as a "not unreasonable position," but with a caveat.

"We should all be in this together," Mandelman said. "If we don't have shelters for folks, we should allow folks to find shelter when they can where they can, on the street if they must, on sidewalks if they must, in public plazas and parks if they must. It is not an insane position. It is a humane position. It is not the position of the majority of San Franciscans or anything close.

"And I, as an elected representative in a democracy, believe that I need to be responsive to the reasonable demands of my constituents, that they be able to use their public spaces, that they not be privatized in a completely unregulated way, turned over to uses that are damaging and destructive, not always but sometimes and cause significant challenges not for the most affluent communities in San Francisco because they don't have encampments in their midst; they don't have RVs," he said.

Meanwhile in District 7, Supervisor Myrna Melgar is already experienced in dealing with vehicles along Winston Drive, which after three years of effort resulted in housing for 52 families, she claims.

"It was not a smooth exercise," Melgar said. "Had it not been for the persistence of people on my staff and myself in weekly meetings with HSH and SFMTA, I don't think we would have been as successful. In defense of the SFMTA, they are charged with streets, with keeping the public right of way. They are not the housing department nor the homeless department.

"So, this is where, I think, we have failed as a city. We don't have a good system for families living in RVs to get into housing they can afford, whether that is supportive or not.

"We own a lot of land in this city, between the port, the airport, PUC (San Francisco Public Utilities Commission) and yet we have not been able to pull that off, I think because we have charged the wrong department. It's not the SFMTA's problem to solve nor is it HSH because that's not quite what they do," Melgar said.

"We are going to have a new administration that I hope tackles the structural issues and lack of capacity within our city family to address this issue. I hope that they do," she said.

"I don't see a way to figure this out without parking restrictions. Part of the problem is that we have pushed folks living in vehicles into certain areas of our city and they tend to be in the Bayview, the Excelsior and the areas where working people live," Melgar added. "We have caused this problem. But I think that you don't do the punitive measures first. I think you provide the support that people need. Eventually, I will support the parking restrictions when we have a system to deal with it, which I don't think we have today."

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RVs parked on 19th Avenue between Stonestown and SFSU. This is one of the places where those who are left from Winston Drive ended up parking. *Photograph by Thomas K. Pendergast.*

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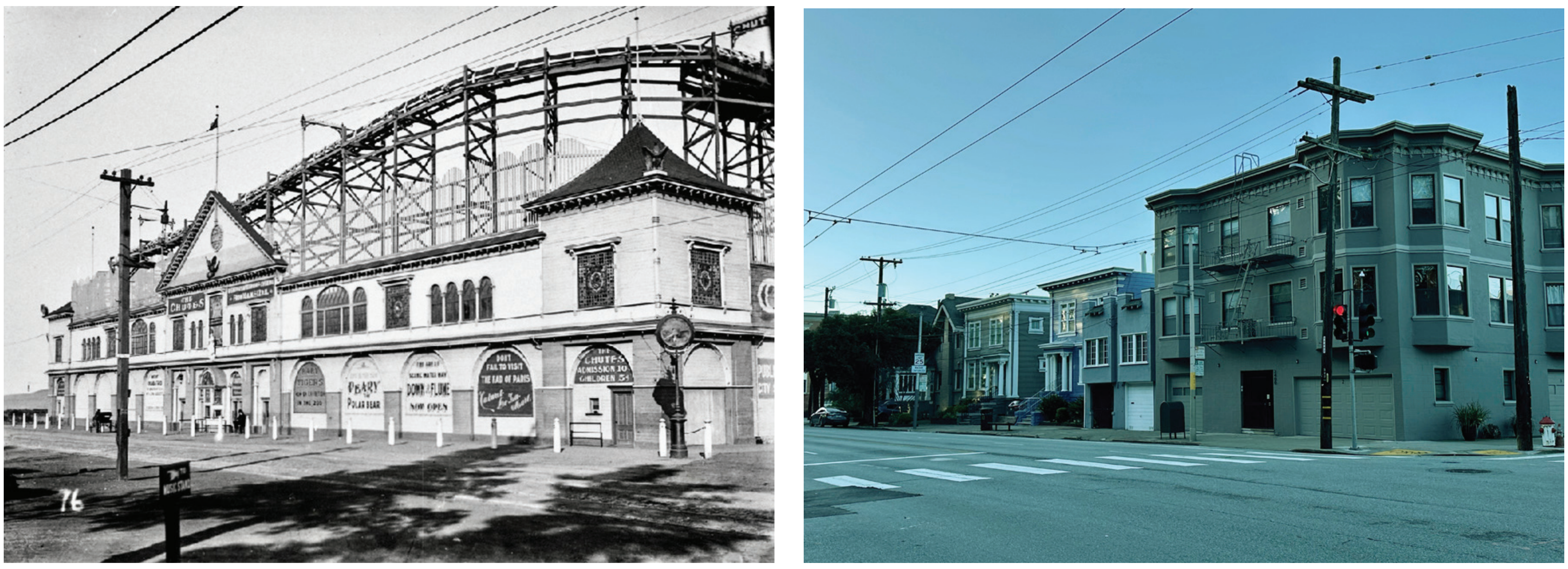
‘Then and Now’: The Chutes on Fulton Street at 10th Avenue



Left: The Chutes, on Fulton Street between 10th and 11th avenues. According to Greg Gaar at FoundSF.org, the Richmond District in 1902-1907 was home to the Chutes, the “largest pleasure resort in America.” First introduced in London as a big toy for the wealthy and called the “Toboggan Slide,” Chutes franchises appeared all over Europe in the late 19th century. The thrill of riding a boat down giant water slide and careening into a lake at “a mile a minute” quickly became a big splash in America. Coney Island was the site of the country’s premier Chutes. On Nov. 2, 1895, San Francisco’s first Chutes opened on Haight Street at Cole Street. Finding the grounds too small to accommodate the large crowds, “new Chutes” opened on Fulton at 10th Avenue in 1902. The admission charge was a dime for adults and a nickel for children. It later moved to Fillmore Street at Webster Street. *Photo courtesy of a private collector/Western Neighborhoods Project/OpenSFHistory.* Right: Today, houses and apartments fill the block that was once an amusement park. *Photo by Michael Durand.*

From the Editor

Michael Durand

In the Year 2025

In 1969, there was a hit song by Zager and Evans (who?) called “In the Year 2525.” As they counted up the years starting at 2525, the lyrics painted a rather bleak picture of a dystopian destiny for mankind.

“Everything you think, do and say is in the pill you took today.” They predicted we won’t “need your teeth, won’t need your eyes.... Your arms hanging limp at your sides, your legs got nothin’ to do. Some machine’s doin’ that for you.”

Back in 1969, when I was 14 years old, the year 2025 felt just as much in the future as that science fiction fantasy. I remember thinking 1984 was going to be something to pay attention to, thanks to the George Orwell novel that also predicted a dystopian future.

But here we are, a quarter of a century into the new millennium, and some things do feel quite futuristic.

I have taken a few Waymo rides and definitely feel like I’m in the future when I’m in a car that drives itself. During my ride, though, it didn’t take long before I was scrolling social media apps on my hand-held computer that is connected to the virtually limitless internet with all its information and entertainment.

I feel like I’m in the future when I watch television and stream whatever shows I want to see, when I want to see them. I grew up with four channels: ABC, NBC, CBS and PBS. Shows came on at specific times, and if you missed them, you were mostly out of luck, unless the network aired “re-runs.” The screens were in black and white; color came later. TV Guide had a “c” in parentheses for the few shows that were broadcast in color.

I remember when remote controls were new. Early ones made a clicking noise, and I know people who still call their remote the “clicker.”

My father referred to the refrigerator as the “ice box,” a holdover from when the ice man brought blocks of ice to his home to keep food fresh.

My home phone FR-8-0546 didn’t have an area code when I was young. The letters referred to a local call station – ours was in Freeport. “Long distance” calls were a big deal, and expensive. Now we chat on our cell phone with people practically anywhere.

The post office had a major advertising campaign featuring Mr. Zip (aka, Zippy) who introduced the five-number zip codes to be used for the addresses we wrote on envelopes. Back then, we needed to lick stamps to make them stick.

When I was born, there were only 48 states! Alaska and Hawaii became the 49th and 50th states as I was learning how to tie my shoes.

So, here we are in the future. There are no ubiquitous flying cars, yet, and it’s not quite the dystopia many had predicted. Enjoy what you have when you have it. Nothing lasts forever.

Thank You, Woody!

On the page 12 is a story about Golden Gate Park by Woody LaBounty. We owe a debt of gratitude to Woody and other history friends who keep track of our past and remind us what came before now.

I spent many years playing softball with friends at Speedway Meadow, so it is fun for me to see where the name came from.

Woody has been very generous allowing us to share his work and we are very grateful to him. The same goes for our friends at the Western Neighborhoods Project (Woody was one of the founders). They allow us to use their cool history photos for our “Then and Now” feature each month. It is one of our more popular offerings. I have been told by quite a few readers that they cut out and save that part of the paper. Thank you, historians, for reminding us of the past.

“Dwell on the past and you’ll lose an eye. Forget the past and you’ll lose both eyes.” – Alexander Solzhenitsyn.

Geary Boulevard Infrastructure

Soon construction will begin on the infrastructure under the Richmond’s busiest street.

Visit our website to read all about it in a sponsored post titled “SFPUC to Upgrade Richmond District’s Essential Infrastructure.” We are sure to have stories about the project in future issues.

Seal Rock Inn Restaurant

A lot of hearts were broken when the Outer Richmond saw the Seal Rock Inn Restaurant close several years ago. Keep an eye out for Alfred Schilling’s Bistro at Seal Rock Inn – an authentic bistro Parisienne coming any day now.

Meet the Editor Sessions

One of my favorite parts of this job is community outreach. Whether it is staffing a table at the night markets, Autumn Moon festivals and other events, or holding Meet the Editor sessions, I enjoy talking with our readers face to face. Thank you to those who came over to speak with us.

If you know a small business or organization that would be interested in hosting our sessions in 2025, please send me an email (address below).

By the way, another cool event is coming to the Richmond, thanks to the Richmond Neighborhood Center and other sponsors. Please see the ad on page 4 and save Jan. 18 on your calendar for the Richmond District Lunar New Year Good Luck Parade.

Happy New Year and Gung Hay Fat Choy friends!

Michael Durand is the editor and publisher of the Richmond Review and Sunset Beacon newspapers and the RichmondSunsetNews.com website. He can be reached at Editor@RichmondSunsetNews.com.

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Supervisor Connie Chan

Meet the D1 Team

Happy 2025, everyone! I am immensely proud of the work we did together for the last four years, advancing policies to make San Francisco and the Richmond District work for all of us. This could not have been done without the amazing District 1 team.

As I embark on our next four years as your supervisor, I am excited to (re) introduce you to our team to continue the work of representing the best district in San Francisco.

Angelina Yu: Angelina continues to bring amazing constituent services and community support to the D1 team. She is a Richmond resident who has a deep connection to the neighborhood and an outstanding commitment to public service. We are lucky to have Angelina helping to take care of neighborhood issues and supporting our Richmond residents and businesses.

Calvin Yan: Calvin joins us after working hard for Chinatown and North Beach residents under SF Board of Supervisors President Aaron Peskin. Calvin is an incredible addition to the D1 team. He brings extensive knowledge of city government and will serve as our connection to the Chinese-speaking community and media.

Frances Hsieh: Frances continues to manage our legislative efforts and is an amazing asset to the D1 team. Her knowledge of legislative policy and her in-depth understanding of our city budget is unmatched. She has been in public service her entire career and is dedicated to the advancement of policies to protect our working families and vulnerable residents.

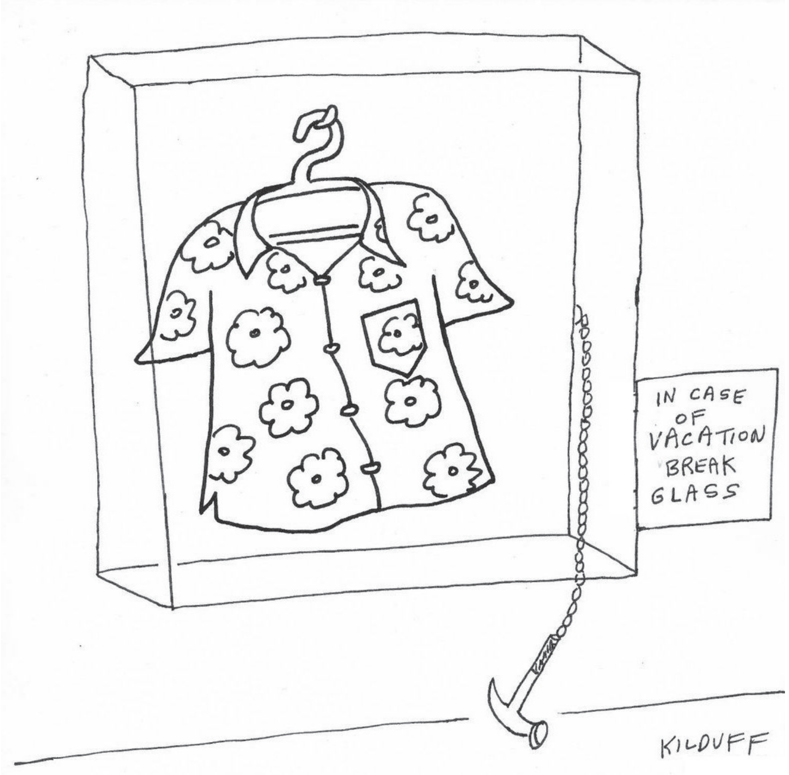
Robyn Burke: Robyn continues to handle communications and scheduling for the D1 office. She sends out our neighborhood newsletters, press releases on policies we advance and manages our social media accounts. Robyn has worked in public service her entire career and is dedicated to ensuring our community is informed and engaged in our work.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve District 1 for another four years. I will continue to work hard as your supervisor, protecting our vulnerable communities and standing up for our San Francisco values, particularly in the face of a new Trump administration. Together, we will stand up and fight back. The D1 team and I are here to support you. If you have any questions or an issue you need help with, please feel free to contact us at chanstaff@sfgov.org or 415-554-7410.

Connie Chan represents District 1 on the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

Kilduff's Korner

By Paul Kilduff


IN CASE OF VACATION BREAK GLASS
KILDUFF

Midi Puzzle

Jess Goldstein

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ACROSS
1. Part of a lot
5. Air pollution portmanteau
9. Classic camera
11. Pixar film set on the Italian Riviera
12. One doing lines?
13. Lab work
14. Shake on it, perhaps
16. Colorful Apple product
17. High-end sushi option
18. K-pop group with an "army"
21. Durable wood
22. Queens ballplayer
23. Granola ingredient
24. Tarzan's partner
26. "Am I seeing things?"
31. It may be applied to a lid
32. "Sit with me!"
33. Bread heels
34. Yogurtlike drink
35. Trash talk
36. Soup samples

DOWN
1. Word of dismay
2. "New Girl" character
3. Dancer and pinup Hayworth
4. Bacteria that may cause a recall
5. Snow day toy
6. One of the Ms in MOMA
7. Pump figure
8. Mind-gamed
10. One who designs their degree?
13. Pain from screen time
15. Political streamer Piker
18. Played ten frames in a lane
19. Sesame-based paste
20. Fans' place
25. Namesake for an iconic chair
27. NASA telescope launched in 2018
28. Get a better loan, briefly
29. Hallucinate
30. Possessive pronoun

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